REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The present Amendment is in response to the Office Action having a mailing date of September 12, 2005. Claims 1-25 are pending in the present Application. Applicant has amended claims 1, 12, and 15. Consequently, claims 1-25 remain pending in the present Application.

Applicant has amended claims 1, 12, and 15 to more clearly recite that the print jobs are to be performed using distributed printing. Support for the amendment can also be found in the specification, page 18, lines 16-17. Moreover, claims 1, 12, and 15 previously recited systems and a method that perform distributed printing. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that no new matter is added and that the scope of claims 1, 12, and 15 is not narrowed.

In the above-identified Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-25 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,466,935 B1 (Stuart). In addition, in response to Applicant's arguments, the Examiner cited Stuart, col. 5, lines 55-56; col. 6, lines 64-66; and col. 9, lines 20-22 as disclosing using the relational database(s) to schedule print jobs and col. 9, lines 18-29 and FIGS. 1, 2, and 4 as teaching certain factors used in scheduling the print jobs.

Applicant respectfully traverses the Examiner's rejection. Claim 1 recites:

> 1. A system for providing distributed printing comprising:
> a plurality of printers;
> at least one print spooler for managing printing operations of the plurality of printers; and
> at least one relational database coupled with the print spooler, the relational database including a plurality of tables, the plurality of tables storing a plurality of print objects to be performed using distributed printing;
> wherein the at least one print spooler is configured to utilize the at least one relational database to perform scheduling print jobs based on a plurality of factors including a priority of the print job, an availability of at least one of the plurality of printers, and at least one other factor corresponding to at least one other of the plurality of print objects.

Similarly, claim 12 recites:

12. A system for providing distributed printing comprising:

a plurality of printers;

at least one print spooler for managing printing operations; and

at least one relational database coupled with the print spooler, the relational database including a plurality of tables for storing a plurality of print objects to be performed using distributed printing, the plurality of tables includes a printer table for the plurality of printers, a jobs table for a plurality of print jobs, an accounts table for a plurality of users, and a history table for a plurality of print events and wherein the plurality of objects includes the plurality of printers, the plurality of print jobs, the plurality of users, and the plurality of print events, the plurality of printers, the plurality of print jobs, the plurality of users;

wherein the at least one print spooler is configured to utilize the at least one relational database to perform scheduling the plurality of print jobs based on a plurality of factors including a priority of the plurality of print jobs, an availability of at least one of the plurality of printers, and at least one other factor corresponding to at least one other of the plurality of print objects.

Claim 15 recites:

15. (Previously Presented) A method for performing distributed printing comprising:

(a) using at least one print spooler to access at least one relational database including a plurality of tables to schedule at least one print job to be performed using distributed printing, the plurality of tables storing a plurality of print objects including a plurality of printers, the using the at least one print job including utilizing the at least one print spooler and the at least one relational database to perform scheduling the at least one print job based on a plurality of factors including a priority of the plurality of print jobs, an availability of at least one of the plurality of printers, and at least one other factor corresponding to at least one other of the plurality of print objects; and

(b) printing the at least one print job to at least one of the plurality of printers.

Thus, independent claims 1, 12, and 15 recite systems and a method for performing distributed printing and in which the print job(s) and print object(s) are to be performed via distributed printing. As described in the specification, distributed printing includes jobs that are relatively small (tens of pages or less) and jobs that are from sources that are typically large in number and disparate in nature. Specification, page 1, lines 12-15. Furthermore, distributed printing "includes a variety of printing typically performed by employees of an enterprise in the

course of the day-to-day business of the enterprise." Specification, page 2, lines 2-3. "Examples of distributed printing include, but are not limited to, printing of accounting information, local payroll data or checks, palette tickets for attachment to crates being shipped, bay diagrams, or other routine printing for the particular enterprise that is relatively low volume." Specification, page 2, lines 5-7. Distributed printing is in contrast to legacy printing, which typically involves a small number of high volume printers, large jobs, and jobs typically having a source such as a main frame. Specification, page 1, lines 6-10. Examples of distributed printing includes, for example, printing of customer invoices for example by a utility company. Specification, page 1, lines 12-13.

Although Stuart functions for its intended purpose, Stuart fails to teach or suggest a system or method that performs distributed printing using the recited relational database and print spooler. Instead, the system of Stuart apparently relates to legacy printing. In particular, the system of Stuart is described as existing in a "mailing environment". Stuart, col. 5, lines 34-37. Stuart thus describes functions relating to providing bills (invoices) for customers. Stuart, col. 5, lines 34-44. Moreover, although Stuart describes a variety of devices used in processing the print jobs, such as printers and inserters (e.g. Stuart, col. 1, lines 37-52), Applicant has found no mention in Stuart of the sources of the print jobs being large in number or disparate in nature. Consequently, Applicant respectfully submits that Stuart describes a system for performing legacy printing, rather than distributed printing.

Moreover, Applicant respectfully disagrees that the cited portions of Stuart, col. 5, lines 65-66; col. 6, lines 64-66; col. 9, lines 18-29; and FIGS. 1, 2, and 4 teach scheduling the print jobs based on a plurality of factors including the priority of the print job and an availability of a printer, as recited in claims 1, 12, and 15. Applicant agrees that these portions of Stuart describe

10

various characteristics of print jobs. More specifically, Stuart mentions that "the Priority attribute represents the current priority of the job relative to other jobs of the same scheduling characteristics . . ." Stuart, col. 9, lines 18-21. However, the cited portion of Stuart is does not specifically indicate that the scheduling characteristics include the print jobs' priority, printer availability and at least one other factor. Consequently, Stuart fails to teach or suggest scheduling print jobs based on a plurality of factors including a priority of the print job, an availability of at least one of the plurality of printers, and at least one other factor corresponding to at least one other of the plurality of print objects. Accordingly, for at least the above-identified reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1, 12, and 15 are allowable over the cited references.
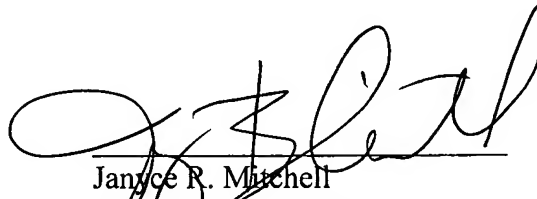
Claims 2-11 and 21 depend upon independent claim 1. Claims 13-14 and 22-23 depend upon claim 12. Claims 16-20 and 24-25 depend upon claim 15. Consequently, the arguments herein apply with full force to claims 2-11, 13-14, 16-20 and 21-25. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 2-11, 13-14, 16-20 and 21-25 are also allowable over the cited references.

Applicant's attorney believes that this application is in condition for allowance. Should any unresolved issues remain, Examiner is invited to call Applicant's attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date

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